

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of managing decoding and playback of a sound signal in an asynchronous transmission system, comprising:

comparing a filling level of a received sound signal with at least one threshold to detect any overabundance of the filling level of at least one of a first buffer memory and a second buffer memory situated at an inlet or an outlet of a decoding block;

implementing voice activity detection to eliminate non-active frames whenever the filling level lies between a first threshold and a second threshold; and

implementing concatenation processing on two successive frames to compact the two frames into a pseudo-frame of length less than or equal to one frame whenever the filling level lies between the second threshold and a third threshold, a length reduction ratio of the pseudo-frame relative to the length of the two frames being greater than or equal to two.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein detection is performed at the inlet or the outlet of a decoding block having a first buffer memory at at least one of its inlet and its outlet to determine whether any frame is missing or erroneous or whether

any samples to be played back are absent, and a fake frame is generated to ensure continuity in the audio playback on detecting such a missing or erroneous frame, or on detecting such an absence of samples for playback.

5. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 4, wherein when the decoding block implements its decoding processing in cyclical manner relative to the content of the first buffer memory, detection of any missing or erroneous frame or of any absence of samples to play back is implemented at the same cyclical frequency, said detection taking place far enough in advance relative to the decoding process to make it possible to generate a fake frame.

6. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 4, wherein a fake frame is not generated when a missing or erroneous frame is detected for a frame on which an absence of samples has already been detected.

7. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 4, wherein, for a system of a type which can voluntarily stop sending frames, a type of a previously-generated frame is stored from one frame to a next frame, and the stored type is used to determine whether to generate fake frames or to generate frames of silence.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein in the processing for concatenating two successive frames, samples of the two successive frames are weighted to give more importance to first samples of a first frame of the two successive frames and to last samples of a second frame of the two successive frames.

9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the thresholds is adaptive.

10. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein at least one of the thresholds is adapted as a function of a length of time passed with a filling level above the respective threshold.

11. (Previously Presented) A device for playing back a sound signal, comprising:

a first buffer memory receiving coded frames;

means implementing decoding processing on the frames stored in said first buffer memory;

a second buffer memory receiving decoded frames output by the decoding means;

sound playback means receiving the frames output by the second buffer memory;

means for detecting any overabundance of a filling level of at least one of the first buffer memory and of the second buffer memory by comparing the filling level with at least one threshold; and

processing means operable such that voice activity detection is implemented to eliminate non-active frames whenever the filling level lies between a first threshold and a second threshold concatenation processing is implemented on two successive frames to compact the two frames into a pseudo-frame of length less than or equal to one frame whenever the filling level lies

between the second threshold and a third threshold, a length reduction ratio of the pseudo-frame relative to the length of the two frames being greater than or equal to two.

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein in the processing for concatenating two successive frames, the two successive frames are combined and averaged.